

EASTERN HEALTH BOARD

Minutes of proceedings of monthly meeting
of the Eastern Health Board held in the Boardroom
St Brendan's Hospital
on Thursday, 4 February 1982 at 6.00 pm

PRESENT

Dr J Behan
Mrs B Bonar
Cllr D Browne
Cllr M Carroll
Prof J S Doyle
Cllr Mrs A Glenn TD
Cllr A Groome
Cllr P Hickey
Cllr F Hynes
Ms N Kearney
Dr D G Kelly

Dr P McCarthy
Prof J McCormick
Sr Columba McNamara
Mr M Matthews
Dr A Meade
Dr B Powell
Dr B Sheehan
Cllr J Sweeney
Cllr G Timmins TD
Cllr W Willoughby

APOLOGIES

Ald B Aheme TD
Mr K Harrington

Dr J Walker

IN THE CHAIR
Cllr Dan Browne

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr P B Segrave
Mr F J Donohue
Mr T Keyes
Mr K Hickey
Mr J Reynolds
Mr P I Lyons
Prof B O'Donnell
Mr P J Swords
Mr J Doyle
Mr FJ McCullough

Mr A O'Brien
Miss A Flanagan
Mr C Mansfield
Mr K Ward
Mr M O'Connor
Mr M Cummins
Mr J Leech
Miss E Larkin
Miss R Carolan

12/82

CONDOLENCE

The Chairman informed the members of the recent death of the son of Mr Mark Clinton, a former Chairman of the Board. The members stood in silence as a mark of respect.

13/82

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the monthly meeting held on 7 January 1982, having been circulated, were confirmed on a proposal by Cllr Hynes, seconded by Cllr Carroll.

14/82

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

Dr Behan requested permission to have Standing Orders suspended to allow him to move a motion that the Board should hold a Special Meeting to consider the plight of elderly people living alone and this was agreed. The following motion was then proposed by Dr Behan, seconded by Cllr Carroll, and agreed unanimously.

"That this Health Board convene an urgent Special Meeting of the Board to examine the plight and needs of elderly people living alone in squalid conditions of poverty and that this meeting afford Mr Willie Birmingham, founder of ALONE, the opportunity to put his case before the Board for assistance in the form of a Task Force."

15/82

REPORT OF MEETING OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

The report of the meeting of the Committee of the Whole House held on 21 January 1982 to consider the Report of the Mental Handicap Committee "Planning Mental Handicap Services", having been circulated, was adopted on a proposal by Dr Behan, seconded by Cllr Hickey.

16/82

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer read the following report, which was noted by the Board:

- (i) The present professional members of the Board were elected for a period of five years with effect from 1 July 1977. Therefore, under the appropriate regulations, it is necessary to hold elections for professional members who will take up appointment with effect from 1 July 1982. I have circulated a detailed memorandum to the members outlining the situation.
- (ii) The Local Government and Public Services Union has advised me that as from Tuesday next, 9 February, its members employed by our Board will not co-operate with Directors of Community Care and Medical Officers of Health. The Union states that it has been in dispute for several years concerning the organisation of Community Care services.

particularly the inclusion by the Minister for Health of a medical qualification as essential for the post of Director. We are continuing discussions with the Union and the Department of Health in the matter. A further meeting has been arranged for tomorrow morning.

- (iii) Members will be aware that we have leased 4.2 acres adjoining St Mary's Hospital, Phoenix Park, to the Cheshire Foundation which provided the site upon which the Cara Cheshire Home has been built. The Foundation has now indicated that the Cara Home wishes to widen its scope to embrace a residential home for severely disabled, a transition unit for residents who, following a period in a supportive situation, would then probably manage outside the home and a day centre for disabled adults. An application has now been received from the Foundation for a further small area of ground (0.462 acres) adjoining the rear of their existing site to facilitate the construction of such units. The area required will not interfere with the amenities of St Mary's Hospital and the particular piece of ground is not suitable or required for developments at the Hospital. I propose, subject to the agreement of the Board, to issue to the members a Section 83 notice for our next Board meeting proposing the granting of a sub-lease to the Cheshire Foundation in Ireland of the area requested subject to the same conditions as the existing sub-lease granted to the Foundation in 1967 at a nominal rent of £10 per annum.

The members agreed to the issue of a Section 83 notice for the next meeting of the Board.

17/82

PROCEEDINGS OF VISITING COMMITTEE

The report of the Community Care Visiting Committee meeting held in Area 4 (Tallaght) on 2 December 1981, having been circulated, was noted on a proposal by Cllr Hynes, seconded by Cllr Hickey.

18/82

DISPOSAL OF DISPENSARY RESIDENCE (AND LAND ATTACHED) AT BLESSINGTON, CO WICKLOW

Consideration of Report No 38/1981 from the Chief Executive Officer, which was before the Board at its December meeting, was deferred until the January meeting. At the January meeting it was agreed to postpone further consideration of the matter until the February meeting, by which time the Wicklow Local Committee would have had an opportunity to make its recommendation.

The Secretary read a letter dated 25 January 1982 from the Wicklow Local Committee stating that at their meeting held on 22 January the following resolution had been proposed by Cllr Timmins, seconded by Cllr Deering, and passed by 12 votes to 7:

"This Committee recommends to the Eastern Health Board that Blessington Dispensary Residence and out offices be sold by the Board to Dr P K Joyce, Blessington, in accordance with Report No 38/1981 and that it be recommended to the Minister that the proceeds of the sale be earmarked for the purpose of erecting a new Health Centre on the Board's site in Blessington."

Following a discussion to which Cllrs Hynes, Groome, Hickey, Mrs Glenn, Sweeney, Carroll, Timmins, the Chairman, Cllr Browne, Dr Powell, Dr Meade, Mr Matthews, Miss Kearney, Dr Behan, Dr Kelly, Mrs Bonar and Professor McCormick contributed, the following motion was proposed by Dr Meade and seconded by Professor Doyle:

"That proposal contained in Report No 38/1981 re disposal of dispensary residence (and land attached) at Blessington, Co Wicklow be approved"

The voting on the motion was as follows:

For: 15: Dr Behan, Mrs Bonar, Cllr Browne, Cllr Carroll, Professor Doyle, Cllr Mrs Glenn, Dr Kelly, Dr McCarthy, Professor McCormick, Sr Columba, Dr Meade, Dr Powell, Dr Sheehan, Cllr Timmins, Cllr Willoughby.

Against: 6: Cllr Groome, Cllr Hickey, Cllr Hynes, Miss Kearney, Mr Matthews, Cllr Sweeney.

The Chairman declared the motion carried.

19/82

ALLOCATION FOR NON CAPITAL HEALTH SERVICES EXPENDITURE 1982

The Chief Executive Officer read his Report No 3/1982

"We have circulated to the members a letter from the Department of Health dated 27 January 1982 advising the Board of our allocation for non-capital health expenditure in 1982.

The allocation for direct expenditure (excluding £ 18.5 million earmarked as our share of the expenses of the General Medical Services (Payments) Board) totals £112.9 millions.

Our estimate of the cost of maintaining existing services at current levels in 1982 is £120.4m. The allocation is £7.5m less than this figure. We have been advised, however, that the Department propose taking certain measures which would substantially reduce this initial shortfall. In this regard it will be noted from Circular 3/82 (already circulated) that from 1 February 1982 (a) the level of charges which are made in respect of private and semi-private accommodation in public hospitals has been increased and (b) the subvention rates payable in respect of private hospitals, nursing and maternity homes, and private psychiatric hospitals have been reduced. In addition to this the letter of 27 January 1982 indicates further areas where measures to reduce expenditure may be taken.

When all the measures are decided and costed, we will be able to assess the true extent of the shortfall and recommend appropriate action.

The Department in the letter of allocation has asked us to review existing service levels and determine where adjustments must be made so as to ensure that the limits of the expenditure allocation will be observed. We have begun this task against the background outlined with a view to advising the Board of the implications involved.

We are approaching the examination of both the pay and non-pay sections of our budget with a view to ensuring that, to the extent to which it is possible to do so, the impact of the necessary budgetary adjustments on our patients and those at risk is minimised and we are seeking the co-operation of all of our staff towards this end.

We are also examining existing schemes to see if and where, in the context of our responsibilities, resources, including staff, could be more effectively utilised.

When this exercise is completed I will report again to the Board."

Following a discussion to which Dr» Behan, Sheehan, Meade, Kelly, Professor McCormick, Sr Coiumba, Cllrs Hickey, Carroll, Sweeney and Hynes contributed and to which the Chief Executive Officer replied, the report was noted.

20/82

PROCEEDINGS OF LOCAL COMMITTEES

The reports of the following Local Committees, having been circulated, were dealt with as follows:

- (i) Dublin county Local Committie held on 10 December 1981.

On a proposal by Cllr Carroll, seconded by Mrs Bonar. the report was noted

- (i i) Dublin City Local Committee meeting held on 16 December 1981.

On a proposal by Professor Doyle, seconded by Cllr Carroll, the report was noted.

21/82

CORRESPONDENCE

- (i) Department of Health circular 1/82 of 7 January, 1982 regarding Travelling and Subsistence Expenses for members of Health Boards had been circulated. The following motion was proposed by Cllr Sweeney, seconded by Cllr Hynes, and unanimously agreed:

"That travelling expenses in respect of attendance at meetings be paid to members at a rate not exceeding 37p per mile with effect from 1 September 1981."

- (ii) The Secretary read a letter from the Minister for Health to the Chairman expressing her appreciation of the initiative and endeavour displayed by the Health Board during the blizzard and in its aftermath. She requested him to convey to the Chief Executive and the other officers involved her personal thanks for the work which was done and for the excellent liaison which was at all times maintained with her Department. She requested the Board to let her have a report on the work carried out in handling the problems which presented themselves and stated that she would appreciate comments on any lessons which had been learned from experiences in respect of services the Board was required to provide and also in respect of the operation of all other services in the emergency.

Cllr Sweeney stated that, on behalf of the people of Wickow, he wished to thank the Wicklow Community Care team and other officers of the Board for the manner in which they had provided services during the blizzard. He referred to the communication difficulties which existed because of the absence of a radio-telephone link between the Gardai and the helicopter crews.

22/82

OTHER BUSINESS

Sr Columba referred to problems, which had arisen regarding nurses accompanying certain patients while they were being transported by ambulance. Mr Hickey, Programme Manager, undertook to have the case referred to by Sr Columba examined on receipt of further details.

The meeting concluded at 8.15 pm.

CORRECT: P B Segrave
Chief Executive Officer

CHAIRMAN